



THE TRIPLE T

Too Tough Times



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"Telling the story of the 18th Military Police Brigade"

June/July 2008



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers with the 54th Military Police Company Police Transition Team prepare to kneel to the ground after advancing forward during foot patrol training at the al Rashad Police Station May 15 in the New Baghdad District. The training is part of a two-week on-the-job training program aimed to train IP at their local stations. The 54th MP Co. is deployed from Fort Lewis, Wash., and is currently assigned to the 95th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

Iraqi police continue to train, prepare for future missions

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

FOB RUSTAMIYAH – Only four miles west of the criminal spurred violence in Sadr City, more than forty Iraqi policemen arrive early in the morning to begin training at the al Rashad Police Station in the New Baghdad District May 15.

Despite being in the shadow of violence

in neighboring Sadr City, a stronghold for criminal militias in Baghdad, the al Rashad Iraqi policemen show up to work with smiles on their faces and eager to conduct the days training.

The IP recently completed a Basic Recruit Training and are now conducting a two week on-the-job training program before hitting the streets of al Rashad to police their community.

"This area (New Baghdad District) was bad about a month ago. This was a real big hot spot for crime during the Baghdad uprising," said 2nd Lt. James Shaffer, native of Cumberland, Md., who is a platoon leader with 3rd platoon, 54th Military Police Company, and oversees Police Transition Team operations in the New Baghdad District.

(see Rusty pg. 4)

Change.....

First, allow me this opportunity to praise and thank the great Leaders and Soldiers of this Brigade for their extraordinary work and accomplishment over the past 10 months. The day-to-day grind of our mission makes it difficult to see what has been done. But, from my vantage point the results are truly amazing. It is no cliché to say the Iraqi Police are stronger, better, and now prepared to gradually assume control of the streets, villages, and cities of Iraq because of your tireless efforts - and sacrifice.

Over the past 10 months our partnerships with the Iraqi Police have enjoyed great success, and it's just now that we're starting to experience the Iraqi's stepping out on their own, taking charge of their activities and genuine responsibility for their own actions. They are starting to do so without consulting or relying on us as much for support and / or approval. Admittedly, we [Coalition Forces] are often set back by this, angered or bewildered as to why all of sudden the Iraqi's are not keeping us informed like they used to or leaving us out of their planning process, when in reality this is the endstate we have been pushing for - self reliance. It is change, and change that's not always comfortable but the natural evolution of our partnership efforts. We still need to maintain a strong and close relationship with our Iraqi counterparts as there is so much more to do, and we must rely on each other to fight and defeat a very formidable enemy that remains in our area and committed to disrupting our momentum of success. Our great partnerships will not allow this to happen! Embrace the change, let our partnerships mature to new and greater levels, but continually work to strengthen our



By:
Col. Mark Spindler,
CDR, 18th MP Brigade

commitment to each other in order to win the day..... and secure the future for the people of Iraq.

Lastly and certainly not least, allow me to thank our families, friends, and support units for your never-ending support and love to your Soldier. You are our motivation and our strength. Please know we keep you in our thoughts and prayers because we, above all, know the great trials and sacrifice you face - and for this we are ever grateful and blessed.

Be Well.

Respectfully,
Mark Spindler



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'Ever Vigilant'



By:
Command Sgt. Maj.
Bernard McPherson,
CSM, 18th MP Brigade

Greetings: I want to first extend my thanks and gratitude to the many, many FRGs and family members for their continued support of our Soldiers.

The month of May was somewhat a month of relief and renewal; a relief in the fact that there were many Transfers of Authority

Iraqi communities in which they work. Under these conditions Force Well Being remains a constant.

The 720th MP Bn. bade farewell to their mission and headed home to Ft Hood, Texas.

Their replacement was one of my Europe base units; the 793rd MP Bn, (Spartans), LTC Blahovec and CSM Eric Hodges.

We travelled out West to Fallujah to visit the 236th MP Co, and then to Ramadi to attend the TOA, between the 194th MP Co. FT Campbell, and the 603rd. Having not seen the 169th and 170th MP CO in awhile, we went to Al Asad to see them. I wanted especially to visit the 170th MP Co.

(TOA) between incoming and outgoing units.

I found myself being relieved for all the Soldiers, Love ones and Family members who had suffered the "long tour," but soon would be together for at least 12 months before having to gin up and deploy elsewhere.

I felt relief for the incoming unit that, it's tour of duty had begun, and they too would be one day closer to returning to their Love ones or to put it real simple... home.

The month of May marked a since of Renewal because it seemed like the perfect time for units like the HHC 18th MP Bde, to Re-Cock, Assess, Adjust, and continue mission.

I reduced it to the individual level as well. My concerns were most certainly Force Well- Being. With the uncertainty of the Cease fire and the threats against our Combat Out Posts, Joint Security Station, and Forward Operating Bases, my visit to where our Soldiers worked and lived, were consumed primarily with Force Protection and Quality of Life.

Our Soldiers, like many other units, are living in the



The unit had taken casualties during a combine arms operations, and because of "Air" status, I was not able to attend.

The visit was terrific, I not only got a chance to talk to one of the wounded Soldiers, but also attend a unit reenlistment which was held at the biblical site (Abraham's Well).

Once again, I thank our brothers in the West, the 507th CSG; CSM Muhammad, his Boss and

SGM Pigsford for accommodating us with billeting and hospitality. The 507th CSG is a 1st Class unit.

Next month while I plan to travel to see some of our Soldiers, I will spend a small part at home, yes at home.

My EML starts the end of next month, and I am looking forward to seeing my family and conducting some self-maintenance. Of course, I will check the RD personnel in Mannheim to thank them for all of their efforts, but I will also visit our Wounded Warriors at Laundstuhl.

Sincerely,
Ever Vigilant
V7



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Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
54th Military Police Company Police Transition Team demonstrate how to cover another team with suppressive fire while advancing on an objective while IP of the al Rashad IP station look May 15.

Rusty, from PG. 1

Violence has begun to decrease in the past month in the New Baghdad District.

“Crime is down lately in the New Baghdad area and around the IP station that we work at,” said Sgt. Paul Tram, a native of Anaheim, Calif., who is a military police team leader with 3rd platoon and conducts PTT operations at various New Baghdad IP stations.

The military police team at the station credits the drop in violence to diligent leadership at the station and the New Baghdad IP taking a more proactive approach to deterring crime.

“This training teaches the IP how to be more proactive in policing their communities,” said Shaffer. “The station commander is also very proactive by seeking out guidance from Coalition Forces and constantly trying to improve his station.”

The training Shaffer refers to is a two-week long, on-the-job training program that the IP work through in order to become certified policemen. The classes are taught daily for approximately six hours at the station by Iraqi Police advisors. The IPAs are contracted law enforcement personnel, who came to Iraq to help build the IP force from their knowledge and experiences in law enforcement positions.

“Today, we are teaching the IP how to maintain basic police training, foot patrols, dynamic takedown and suspect control, apprehension techniques and responding to an ambush,” said Mike Ridgell, an IPA, and a native of Baltimore.

“The training provides the IP a better background and understanding of their daily duties,” said Shaffer.

Although the violence has gone down in the area in the past month, the IPA and PTT Soldiers are equally surprised that the IP still chose to join the force in such great numbers when Sadr City is right in their backyard.

“Knowing the violence is going on, and still wanting to come out here and try to make a difference, really shows how much these IP want to improve their community,” said Shannon Edison, an IPA and a native of Dayton, Nev.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
Second Lt. James Shaffer, and native of Cumberland, Md., who serves as a platoon leader with 3rd Platoon, 54th Military Police Company, discusses station operations with the commander of the al Rashad Iraqi Police Station during the day's training May 15. The 3rd Platoon conducts Police Transition Team operations in the New Baghdad area.

In the past week, two improvised-explosives devices, one carjacking and one kidnapping were reported to the IP at the station, said Tram.

“Every day, the Rashad police work while knowing they are in harms way,” said Tram. “It is our job to train, advise and guide the IP to help them defend their communities.”

The team leader (Tram) said he is surprised by the amount of courage the IP have in fighting crime when the shadow of violence in Sadr City is only a few miles away.

“It takes a lot of courage to join a police force during this time of violence,” said Tram.

The 54th MP Co. is deployed from Fort Lewis, Wash., and is currently assigned to the 95th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.



Staff Sgt. Michel Sauret
Lieutenant Colonel Michael Blahovec, 793rd MP Bn. commander, delivers a speech during a Transfer of Authority ceremony May 14 on Camp Stryker, as his MP unit assumes command from the 720th MP Bn.

Gauntlet transfers authority to Spartans

By:
Staff Sgt. Michel Sauret,
3rd Inf. Div., PAO

MND-C, Iraq – Soldiers from the 720th Military Police Battalion transferred authority over to the 793rd Military Police Battalion during a ceremony held May 14 on Camp Stryker.

For the 720th MP Bn., known as the Gauntlet, out of Fort Hood, Texas, this was its third deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They responded on a short notice to deploy March 2007 in support of a police transition team (PTT) mission in the Multi-National Division – Center area of operation.

In their place now, the 793rd MP Bn., known as the Spartans, from Bamberg, Germany, will continue the same mission. This includes training Iraqi Police in detainee operations, searching techniques, weapon marksmanship, police investigations and equipment accountability.

During his speech, Lt. Col. Frank Y. Rangel, 720th MP Bn. commander, described arriving to Camp Stryker. His military policemen arrived here with no vehicles, buildings without doors and windows and a communications cell that still needed to be set in motion.

“But we had one secret weapon which



Staff Sgt. Michel Sauret
Command Sergeant Major Jerry A. Craig (left) and Lt. Col. Frank Y. Rangel, battalion command sergeant major and commander of 720th MP Bn., case their battalion colors during a Transfer of Authority ceremony May 14, handing off command to the 793rd MP Bn.

would ensure success in overcoming our many challenges,” Rangel said. “That is, we had Soldiers.”

Rangel spoke with pride of those MP Soldiers willing to work harder for the benefit of their unit’s success.

“These Soldiers compiled a record of achievement and success that boggles the mind,” he said. “Day in and day out they mounted their rides to work at the Iraqi Police stations, secured the venues for their principals, or turned a wrench or fixed a radio ... all the while the threat of an IED or indirect fire loomed just a moment away.”

Throughout this mission, the 720th MP Bn. travelled nearly 1.8 million miles on some of the most dangerous roads, in the most dangerous neighborhoods in the world to develop a police force capable and worthy of the Iraqi people, said Col. Mark Spindler, 18th MP Brigade commander.

The 720th was assigned to the 18th MP Bde. while deployed to Iraq under the operational control of the 3rd Infantry Division in MND-C.

“This battalion was a surge unit ... that, without exaggeration, broke the enemy’s back and momentum, and gave back to the Government of Iraq the chance to regain control,” Spindler said.

For the 793rd MP Bn., their transition process into Camp Stryker was much different since they had Gauntlet Soldiers to

learn from, benefitting from the infrastructure set in place before their arrival.

“We fully intend to take all the progress that’s been made over the past 15 months by the 720th MP Battalion and begin building on that,” said Lt. Col. Michael Blahovec, 793rd MP Bn. commander. “Fortunately we got to spend the better part of the last three weeks working with their staff and leadership and getting out to see all of the units they support.”

During the ceremony, Rangel and Command Sergeant Major Jerry A. Craig cased the 720th MP Bn. colors to symbolize their relief. Their unit will redeploy back to Fort Hood, Texas.

Following them, Blahovec and Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Hodges moved forward and uncased the 793rd MP Bn. colors to complete the transfer of authority.

Blahovec said he looks forward to working in various support and command and control relationships with the 3rd Infantry Division units, from brigade combat team level to company level.

He said his main goal for this deployment is to get things going with the Iraqi people, eventually with the goal of turning things over to IP and give their people a safe and secure environment.

“We wish you Godspeed and safety as you assume the fight,” concluded Rangel.

Gauntlet Soldiers reflect back on 15-month deployment

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

BAGHDAD – For the fourth time in six years, Gauntlet Soldiers of the 720th Military Police Battalion, deployed from Fort Hood, Texas, complete another successful tour in Iraq. “For most of the Soldiers it was their third tour in Iraq,” said Lt. Col. Frank Rangel, commander, 720th Military Police Battalion, and native of Casa Grande, Ariz.

The Gauntlet Battalion conducted its Transfer of Authority Ceremony May. 14 as it hands over Police Transition Team operations in the Multi-National Division-Center area of operations to the 793rd Military Police Battalion, deployed from Bamberg, Germany.

The Battalion’s mission in Iraq was to train the Iraqi Police in the MND-C area of operations and conduct Personnel Security Detachment operations for prominent and political personnel in Iraq.

“One of our biggest accomplishments was that we never lost our principles during those PSD operations,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Drew Craig, command sergeant major, 720th MP Bn., and native of Calhoun, Ga.

The Battalions biggest accomplishment was to establish an Iraqi Police Service Division Cell Management Operation (IPSDCMO) at the MND-C Division Headquarters, which supports IP logistical needs in MND-C area.

Along with the IPSDCMO, the improvements on Joint Security Stations and making those stations livable for Soldiers to work out of were another huge accomplishment for the Battalion.

The Battalion was also responsible to establish four IP stations and continues with one station that is in the process of being set up with an Emergency Response Unit they established in the Babil province.

“We spent a lot of effort on the quality of life for our Soldiers while we were here,” said Craig.

“There are 12 different Forward Operating Bases and JSS across the area the Battalion operates in, which consists of units as far as 10 hours by humvee ride away, we got them all internet, telephones, showers and bathrooms and just improved their way of life overall,” said Craig referring to the Battalions efforts to improve its Soldiers quality of life on the battlefield.

Over and above mission accomplishments, the Bn. was also proud of one of their personal tasks, to renovate the company area that the Battalion staff and Headquarters Detachment operated within. This upon the Bn.’s arrival was an abandoned and damaged group of buildings on Camp Stryker in Baghdad.



*Photo courtesy of U.S. Army
Lt. Col. Frank Rangel, commander, 720th Military Police Battalion, and native of Casa Grande, Ariz., gives guidance to the Soldiers of the 511th Military Police Company, upon their arrival in country, at Forward Operating Base Delta, Iraq in December 2007.*

When asked about the difference in the Iraq Police over the last 15 months Craig responded by saying, “Once violence began to decrease at the end of last summer here, we were able to start training the IP more efficiently and expanded the IP force by recruiting more.”

The Command Sergeant Major credits the decrease in violence to the cease fire declared back in August by radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army, the Sons of Iraq program and the long term effort to build the infrastructure of Iraq and improve the lives of Iraqis.

Once violence decreased and they were able to train the IP; the Bn. leaders have seen great improvements in the IP force at all levels in Iraq.

“They are now willing to go out and do their jobs,” said Rangel, referring to the IP. “They are starting to police their communities by getting into the markets and villages.”

“They are now much better equipped to do their jobs,” continued Rangel, referring to the logistical improvements the Battalion made in the IP force.

“We have equipped the IP with vehicles, weapons, ammunition, radios and a source of other equipment needed to be an effective security force,” said Rangel.

The IP are now transitioning into a stage of self reliance.

“I have seen dramatic improvement in the capabilities of the IP,” said Capt. Timothy Haeberle, assistant operations officer, 720th Mp Bn. and native of Johnson City, Tenn.

“We have seen the IP transition into self reliance,” continued Haeberle, who is deployed for his third tour. “They have improved dramatically since the first time I was here in Operation Iraqi Freedom III, now the IP want to take the lead, which gives us the ability to be more like a Quick Reaction Force now.”

The Command Sergeant Major spoke in reference to the improvements on how the IP force no longer uses intimidation to operate its investigations but uses proper techniques to help solve the cases brought to the IP.

“The IP are doing police work now, instead of intimidation, which they used for so many years under Saddam’s regime,” said Craig.

(see Gauntlet pg. 7)

Gauntlet, from PG. 6

When asked about the future of the IP, Rangel responded by saying, "They will struggle in the short term; they need to get past the sectarian violence, which may require a generation or two to change."

"The young people of Iraq will grow up to make Iraq a better place, there is a lot of potential in this country to be successful in the future," said Rangel.

The Battalion was one of the first military police battalions to complete a 15-month tour in Iraq.

"The 15-month tours are extremely different, from 12 month tours, the Soldiers are extremely tired, not to mention the strain the tour puts on their families," said Craig.

"This was the hardest deployment yet," said 1st Sgt. Daniel Leasor, detachment sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 720th MP Bn. "My kids now are old enough to know that Dad was gone."

Leasor, a native of Louisville, Ken., continued to describe the differences between the 12-month deployment and the 15-month deployment, "You think to yourself, I would have been home if this were a 12-month deployment. The last three months seem to go in slow motion."

Most Soldiers like Leasor have spent several months in Iraq since the start of the war in 2003.

"Some of these Soldiers have spent 39 months in Iraq since 2003, 15 months has a huge impact," said Rangel.

Rangel also added, how surprised he was by the amount of Soldiers in his battalion that still are reenlisting after going through so much deployment time.

"A lot of Soldiers are deciding to stay in the Army," said Rangel, who also is on a third deployment in Iraq.

Craig decided he will retire



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army
Command Sgt. Maj. Drew Craig, command sergeant major, 720th Military Police Battalion, and native of Calhoun, Ga., stops while on a joint foot patrol with Iraqi police forces in Salman Pak, Iraq to take a photo with a local child in January.

after this tour in Iraq after completing 27 years of military service.

"I thought after the Gulf War that would be the end of it," said Craig, who is deployed for his second time. "Military Police have been in war for about 10 years now from Bosnia to Iraq and Afghanistan, and stateside deployments after Sept. 11, 2001."

Craig talked about how the MP mission overall has changed.

"Things MP once did, we don't do anymore, now we just focus on IP here," said Craig. "Your average MP has taken on a huge responsibility here training the IP force."

MP had to adjust often to the changing mission in the last decade but have been successful overall.

"Iraq has been a study in the versatility of our Soldiers," said Rangel referring to the MP mission in Iraq.

The Battalion credits its success during the long deployment to the unit's overall

cohesion.

"My co-workers made the deployment bearable," said Spc. Liza Moak, a native of Grand Rapids, Mich., and human resources clerk for the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 720th MP Bn.

"We all came here together and we will leave here together," continued Moak.

The deployment ends with many memories that the Soldiers will take with them.

"I will never forget Soldiers being wounded, telling me that they are going back into the fight," said Craig. "They have so much pride."

"The valor these Soldiers show in combat is something you also cannot forget," said Rangel.

Craig and Rangel continued by stating that losing Soldiers was the hardest memory they have to overcome.

"Lost Soldier memories, the friends and loved ones to those we lose, we feel a tremendous pain with and for them, we will never forget that," said Rangel

with Craig nodded his head in agreement.

There were also plenty of good memories shared with Soldiers of the Battalion during the tour.

"There were so many good memories spent and time spent just talking to Soldiers and sergeants and seeing how they survived day to day," said Craig looking back on his visits to multiple units in the MND-C area of operations.

The Commander and CSM laughed together as they reminisced on some of the entertaining things they had done and seen during their deployment.

"This is a very close unit," began Craig.

"We took the time to plan fun events to keep the morale of the Soldiers high," said Rangel. "We also took the time to recognize the great performers and great leadership that took care of our Soldiers."

The Commander and CSM also took time to thank their higher headquarters for their leadership in helping complete the mission.

They thanked the 3rd Infantry Division, Multi-National Division-Center, 89th Military Police Brigade and the 18th Military Police Brigade.

"We were really blessed to have leaders that really knew how to take care of Soldiers," said Rangel.

They were also quick to thank the efforts of their friends and families back home for their constant prayers and support.

"We received care packages with lists of stuff we needed, sometimes the boxes would be 50 to 60 pounds each," said Rangel. "That definitely increased the morale here."

"We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts, your prayers definitely made a difference here, nothing we can say could properly thank them for what they have done to support our troops," concluded Rangel.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Spc. Christopher Dooley, a military police soldier, 212th Military Police Company and native of Middleton, N.H., pulls security during a joint foot patrol with Iraqi police in the Yaychi Market May 27. Yaychi is a small village on the outskirts of Kirkuk city. The 212th MP Co., is deployed from Germany and is assigned to the 728th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division-North.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

1st Lt. Matthew Martinez, platoon leader, 212th Military Police Company, and native of Kingsville, Texas, walks alongside the Iraqi Police commander of the Multaka IP Station May 28 following a meeting with the IP commander and the local mayor of Multaka.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

An Iraqi policeman pulls security during a joint foot patrol with Coalition Forces through the Yaychi Market May 27. The joint patrol was part of a community policing effort by CF and the IP of Yaychi to increase relations between IP and the local citizens. Yaychi is a small village on the outskirts of Kirkuk city.

IP in Kirkuk on the road to self-reliance

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

FOB WARRIOR – A late night mission by the 212th Military Police Company's Police Transition Team in the village of Raheem Awa, a predominately Kurdish area on the outskirts of Kirkuk city, left the PTT feeling confident about the future of the Iraqi police in Raheem Awa.

"The station came back strong after getting hit with a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device back in March 2007," said Staff Sgt. David Ballard, squad leader, 212th MP Co., who has been working at the station for two months now. "I am very impressed with the IP leadership at Raheem Awa."

A VBIED carried by a dump truck in March 2007 left the structure of the Raheem Awa Iraqi Police Station in shambles.

Now, a year later the station is about to be validated, which would place the station fully operational under Iraqi Police leadership.

"The station is less than several months away from being officially validated by the Iraqi government," said Master Sgt. Lance Merz, operations sergeant, 212th MP Co., and native of Wenatchee, Wash.

"The station is self reliant," said Ballard, native of D'Iberdille, Miss. "Now we are just waiting on the validation paper work and the station will be off running on its own."

Once the station is validated the 212th MP Co. PTT will only need to periodic check security purposes and sustainment of operations at the station.

"When the station becomes validated we will conduct checks on the station once every couple weeks to let the IP and community know we are still here to help," said 1st Lt. Matthew Martinez, platoon leader, 212th MP Co., and native of Kingsville, Texas.

The station in Raheem Awa is following in the footsteps of the several stations already validated in the Kirkuk area, which includes the Kirkuk District Headquarters.

Since arriving in Kirkuk the 212th MP Co., PTTs have been in the overwatch position at most of their stations in and around the Kirkuk area and are very impressed with the IP efforts to enforce rule of law in their communities.

"I am very impressed with the IP leadership here at the station," said Ballard, following a joint patrol in Raheem Awa to make sure curfew was being recognized by

local citizens.

During the visits to the IP stations by the PTTs the IP commanders talk about criminal activities in the area and any major problems they are having in recent days since the PTT last visit.

"IP report criminal activities to us and nothing too bad is going on in the area," said Ballard, who conducts PTT operations at several of the units 39 assigned stations in the Tamim and two other neighboring provinces.

"I credit good IP leadership to the success of these stations," said Ballard.

Even though the stations in the Kirkuk area are moving to be self reliant; the job of the PTT continues until Iraq citizens are safe from criminals.

"Security of the citizens of Kirkuk is the most important thing on our minds, and we are continuing to move forward in completing that mission," said Martinez.

National Colors fly over MP Bn. Headquarters in Baghdad

Story Courtesy of:
716th Military Police Battalion

BAGHDAD- The former Commander of the Peacekeeper Battalion, Col. (Ret) Burleson requested assistance in supporting the Tennessee Chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Col. Burleson thought of his former Battalion after his experience with the 2007 Make-A-Wish fund raising auction.

In his request he noted that an American flag flown by Soldiers in combat drew enthusiastic bidding.

After contacting the present 716th Military Police Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Darryl Johnson for assistance; leaders and Soldiers quickly rallied to support the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Two American flags were donated by 1st Sgt. Brian Flom, 401st MP Company deployed from Fort Hood, Texas.

The flags were flown over the Battalion Headquarters at Victory Base Complex (VBC) in Baghdad, Iraq by Cpl. Kathryn Humphrey and Spc. Wesley Adkins (VBC) folded in accordance with protocol and prepared for patrol with Master Sgt. Jamie Desrochers, HHD 716th Military Police Battalion Police Transition Team.

Desrochers, who travels to numerous Iraqi Police Stations conducting partnership with Iraqi Security Forces, was able to escort the flags on a true combat patrol.

All Soldiers involved in the project are on their second tour



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

Cpl. Humphrey and Spc. Adkins, HHD 716th Military Police Battalion prepare the nation's colors to fly over the 716th Military Police Battalion Headquarters, Baghdad Iraq March 13. Two flags were donated to the Make-A-Wish Foundation Tennessee Chapter and raised 6600 dollars in the auction.

in support of the Global War on Terrorism and were extremely passionate about having the flags tell their story.

The flags were shipped to Col. (Ret.) Burleson and auction on April 26 and raised over 6600 dollars for the foundation.

Pictures of the flag being flown over the Battalion Headquarters and on patrol were provided along with a certificate of authenticity.

The Peacekeeper Battalion is famous for being the most decorated Military Police Battalion in the world and prides itself in supporting the local community through service projects.

The opportunity to highlight military police heroes and support the needs of an outstanding charitable organization was an honor for all involved.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Dragon Maulers

Soldiers from the 54th Military Police Company demonstrate how to perform cover fire when on a foot patrol as part of training at the al Rashad Iraqi Police Station May 15. The demonstration was part of a two week, on-the-job training program that IP work while becoming fully certified Iraqi policemen. The 54th MP Co. is deployed from Fort Lewis, Wash., and is currently assigned to the 95th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

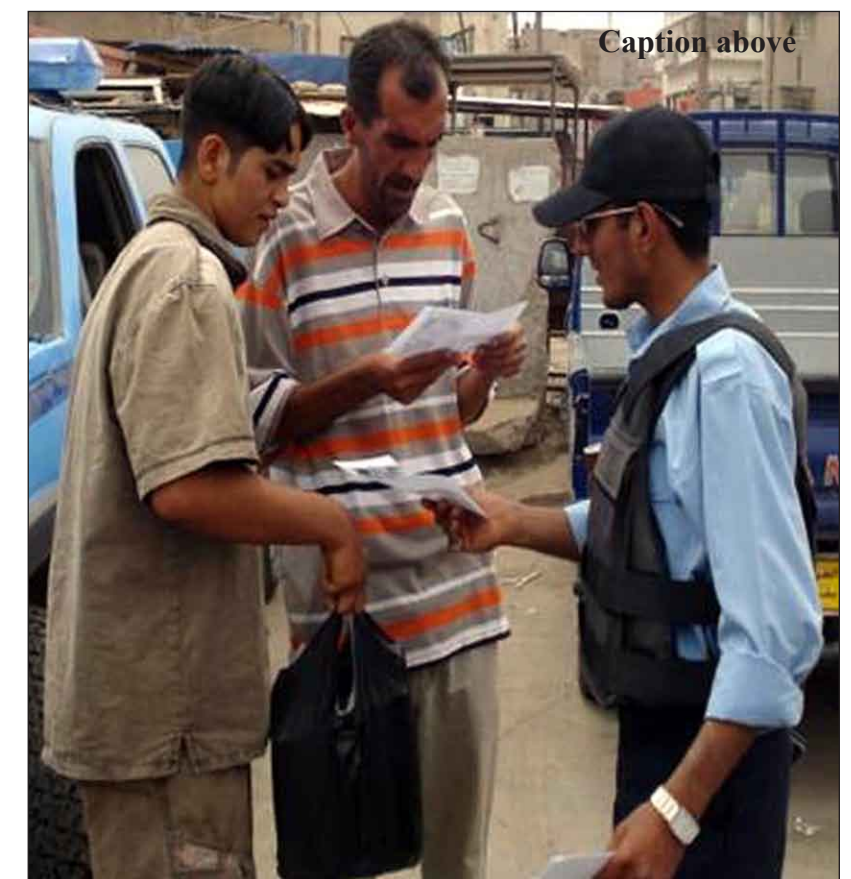
Rule of Law

UPPER LEFT: IP, Maj. Jaseem, commander of a West Samarra PS provides Lt. Col. Bryan Bisacre, commander, 728th MP Bn., a situational overview of his station while requesting additional assistance in order for his station to be fully operational during a visit in Samarra early May.

LOWER LEFT: Members of the Iraqi MOI, IP, Non-Governmental Organizations and CF meet near an Internally Displaced Civilian Camp in Baghdad May 12.

RIGHT SIDE: An Iraqi Policeman from the Bab Al Sheik District spends time with local community members on the street and at a local market and encourage the residents to report any criminal or suspicious activity. The Iraqi Police handed out TIP phone cards and talked to the community members about the importance of helping to make the area a safer place to live. The policemen continue to foster a positive atmosphere with the citizens.

BELOW: Children gather around an IP truck filled with pens and paper as the IP give out supplies in Diyarrah, Iraq.



Caption above



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Iraqi policemen at the Karadah District Headquarters stand ready in their morning formation for guard mount prior to starting work May 16. Violence has decreased significantly in the past year in the Karadah area, which now has more robust IP force in the area due to the joint GoI and Multi-National Division-Baghdad expansion plan of Iraqi Police in Baghdad. The IP expansion put more trained IP on the streets of Baghdad to establish the rule of law.

Strong leadership brings rule of law to Baghdad neighborhood

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

FOB RUSTAMIYAH – The strength of the Iraqi Police force has grown significantly in size and their ability to protect its citizens in Karadah in the past year is not by luck, but by steady fast leadership from the District Iraqi Police Headquarters.

Col. Kareem Salman, Karadah District Commander, is working hand in hand to ensure this trend continues as he works along side Coalition Forces and the 1132nd Military Police Co., North Carolina National Guard unit.

The 1132nd MP Co. on May 16 arrived at the Iraqi District Headquarters with a Police Transition Team to check in as they oversee operations at the District Headquarters. During the visit to the station, the squad leader reviewed operational needs with the district commander and offered any assistance or supply requests that were needed to improve the police force.

“The colonel never asks for anything for himself only for his station,” said Staff Sgt. Joseph Carberry, squad leader, 1132nd MP Co., and native of Clinton, N.C.

The MP squad continues to see a trend of improvements within this district. The CF Soldiers have helped more in the past than they do now.

“We have built stuff for them and as they

saw us do it, then they (IP) started building stuff for themselves,” said Carberry, referring to some of the station improvements the PTT has helped with.

But the physical things are not the only areas that have been improved upon, but the pride and abilities the IP and commander demonstrate.

The squad of military police Soldiers credit the success of the stations to the station’s District Commander, who is constantly mentoring and guiding his IP to continue to establish rule of law in their community.

“He is sometimes up as early as 4 a.m. checking in on his IP at the checkpoints making sure they are doing their jobs,” said Carberry.

Carberry added, I have seen a lot of progress in the IP establishing rule of law in Karadah since they arrived a year ago.

“There is a lot less crime from day one, when we arrived here,” said Carberry. “The colonel has seen how we help him and gets along well with us.”

The IP commander’s assessment is that violence in Karadah is decreased significantly in the past year.

“Violence has decreased, now you don’t find as many dead bodies, improvised explosive devices, or hear of kidnappings all crimes in Karadah are less frequent now,” said Salman, commander, IP Karadah

District.

Salman credits the decrease in violence to the fact that different religious sects in Baghdad are starting to work together for the first time.

“There is less sectarian violence, which never happened before,” said Salman. “Religious sects are starting to work together, now the only thing holding the people of Baghdad back from peace is criminals in the area.”

“We want this country to be safe so that we can remove the sand bags. That is our goal for Karadah, Salman”

Salman agrees the IP and Coalition Forces are making progress but that the criminals are the only thing that stands in the way of future success.

“Criminals try to break the progress we are making,” said Salman.

Rodney Dallas, an Iraqi Police Advisor, who has worked at the station for the past two years, said he witnessed the IP and CF sweep through Karadah several times trying to rid the area of criminals.

“The IP and CF sweep through the area a lot to counteract violence when it begins to break out,” said Dallas, a native of Tupelo, Miss.

“We are trying to make the IP system work the best we can,” said Dallas referring to the PTT mission at the station.

(see Karadah pg. 13)

Karadah, from PG. 12

In the past two years Dallas has seen the several factors contribute to the decrease in violence in Karadah.

"The surge, which brought more troops into Baghdad and the expansion of the IP force's strong leadership encouraging IP to do their jobs," said Dallas.

"When Salman says it, he means what he says," said Dallas, referring to Salman's leadership style.

Salman thanks the PTT for their help in aiding the people of Karadah.

"United States Soldiers take care of the civilian people," said Salman, as he discusses a future medical delivery operation by CF to a local clinic in the area.

"It is a priority for us to get the medical supplies to the poor people in Karadah," continued Salman.

Although violence has decreased in Karadah, criminal activities are still present in the area making the job for IP dangerous everyday.

"It has been a dangerous job since 2003," said Salman. "We have a dangerous job here."

"There are still criminals in Karadah,



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
Staff Sgt. Joseph Carberry, squad leader, 1132nd Military Police Company, North Carolina National Guard, discusses recent criminal activities in the Karadah area with Col. Kareem Salman, commander, Karadah District, May 16 at the Karadah District Headquarters. Violence has decreased significantly in the past year in the Karadah area, which now has more robust IP force in the area due to the joint GoI and Multi-National Division-Baghdad expansion plan of Iraqi Police in Baghdad. The IP expansion put more trained IP on the streets of Baghdad to establish the rule of law.

but they are running and they cannot run forever," said Dallas.

The 1132nd MP Co., North Carolina National Guard will return to North Carolina in the upcoming weeks as they conclude

their Operation Iraq Freedom deployment. While deployed they were assigned to the 95th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

The highs, lows of Summer

By:
Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Peter Baktis
18th MP Bde. Chaplain

June is upon us and it is time for summer. Summer brings many different emotional highs and lows. It is a time of PCSing, and once again the time to say good bye to the many friends and acquaintances that have been made.

A change in status for those who have graduated high school and now have to begin to think about college or finding work and setting out on new beginnings. It is a time when people have planned for their weddings and family reunions. For some it is just the time for that long awaited family vacation and for Dad or Mom to come home on R&R. How do you take care of yourself during this seemingly busy time?

The words of Psalm 63:4 states: "For even the sparrow found a house for herself, and the turtledove a nest for herself where she will lay her young."

If our Creator grants a place for the sparrow and turtledove how much more does



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
Soldiers of the 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, bow their heads in prayer during a mid-tour prayer breakfast at the 18th MP Bde. headquarters on Camp Victory May 8. The prayer breakfast was set up in an effort to rejuvenate the Soldiers' spirits, who are mid-way through their deployment.

He prepare a place for us?

What we need to do is to find that place. What that means is that we first need to be willing to look.

Often times we fill our days with much activity, or we allow others to fill the day with activity that we do not even see the place of rest and quiet that has been prepared

for us. Often times the only place that we feel that we can get away is when we finally collapse on our bed and fall asleep.

If we allow ourselves to become too overwhelmed with too much activity we have no one to blame but ourselves, and in fact we may need to look deeply into ourselves and ask, "Why?"

Summer activities and R&R are supposed to rejuvenate us and give us a time of rest. It is not without reason that the "summer reading lists" are published by such papers as the New York Times.

Let us take the time to find our house and our nest to stop rest and reflect upon the many blessings that have been given to you. Take time to let someone know how thankful and special they are to you. Remember, even the battery of the Energized Rabbit runs out.

A blessed summer CH Baktis

Who does the chaplain go to?

Chaplain retreat provides care for the caregiver

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

Soldiers who are deployed are under constant pressure on the battlefield and at the same time personal stresses back home loom over their head: family issues, financial issues, personal loneliness, spouse issues and many more.

Soldiers can become overwhelmed with all these added stresses along with trying to be there for the battle buddy and when this need arises, they are able to seek out help to battle their stresses. Who can they go to in this time of need?

The U.S. Army answers that call by providing the availability of Chaplains!

"The mission of a chaplain, while deployed, is to minister and help Soldiers in order to meet their spiritual needs," said Maj. Charles Hamlin, chaplain, 716th Military Police Battalion and native of Flaherty, Ky.

While chaplains deal with Soldier issues on a daily basis and provide Soldiers with needed guidance and a place to vent their stresses, who does the chaplain go to when the stresses of combat become overwhelming?

"We are not invincible people," said Lt. Col. Peter Baktis, chaplain,

18th Military Police Brigade and native of Brooklyn, N.Y. "People always think that we have all the answers."

When chaplains need to find answers for themselves; some go to their religious powers, some take time to themselves, some talk to friends and loved ones back home, and some seek guidance from other chaplains and their chaplain assistants.

"At times we all hit our capacity," said Baktis, referring to the stress chaplains face doing their daily job.

Baktis began to look for a way to give his chaplains a break while deployed so that they can recharge their batteries and continue their mission of providing care for Soldiers.

The Brooklyn native, (Baktis) found that a getaway at the Morale Welfare and Recreational facility: Freedom Rest, which is located in the Green Zone of Baghdad.

The facility, which consists of a large pool, dining facility and many recreational activities to entertain Soldiers, provides Soldiers a break from the stresses of combat.

The chaplains of the 18th MP Bde., which has a total of four battalions scattered throughout the Iraq theater, came together recently at Freedom Rest to hold a Chaplain's retreat to recharge their spiritual batteries.

"This conference gives us a chance, in a non-threatening environment, to experience that we are not alone in our mission and that others are having the same experiences," said Baktis, referring

to the three-day chaplain retreat.

The conference is not only a spiritual recharge for the chaplains, but also served as a career development seminar.

"You get great ministry ideas, the brigade is separated geographically throughout Iraq and we get new ideas on how to minister to troops that are scattered throughout Iraq," said Capt. Jay Clark, chaplain, 728th Military Police Battalion and native of Bismarck, N.D.

During the

retreat the chaplains discussed the different stresses they face while helping Soldiers and ways to combat those stresses.

"Walking with Soldiers who lose a teammate and helping them overcome that hurt and pain to get back into the fight is the hardest part of the job," said Hamlin, a chaplain of 14 years.

"Caring for Soldiers enough to share in their hurt and taking ownership of their hurt in whatever issue that is," continued Hamlin. "Showing the Soldier you care... Chaplains need to be caring to the point where they are carrying that burden for the Soldiers."

Baktis said the hardest part of the job is giving Soldiers a reason for doing their jobs.

(see Chaplains pg. 15)



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
Capt. Simon Chang, 793rd Military Police Battalion's chaplain and native of Schaumburg, Ill., enjoys some 'relax-time' in the pool at Freedom Rest center June 3, during 18th Military Police Brigade's chaplains' retreat at the Freedom Rest center. The retreat gives chaplains and their assistants time off to relax and be able to better their skills of ministering to Soldiers.

Chaplains, from PG. 14

"Answering people's questions about their end purpose is the hardest part," said Baktis, a chaplain for 17 years. "Giving people meaning and purpose. Sometimes Soldiers don't see the change that they are making here."

Capt. Christopher Dickey, chaplain, 95th Military Police Battalion, compared giving purpose to Soldiers here like raising children.

"It's like seeing your kids grow up," said Dickey. "You see them everyday, so you don't see the change when you're here everyday."

Dickey mentioned the Iraqi Police improvement from the beginning of the operation in Iraq to now and how military police are now in a more support role.

"Being alone in the job is the hardest part of the job," said Capt. Simon Chang, chaplain, 793rd Military Police Battalion. "When I have problems I just go to God or my senior chaplain, who are more experienced."

Chang, with seven years experience as a chaplain, credits the retreat to reorienting himself to his mission, which will set him up for success on the rest of his deployment.

The chaplains said that unlike past wars this war has been a constant everyday battle with little downtime for Soldiers. So a retreat like Freedom Rest is much needed.

"The retreat has recharged my battery," said Hamlin. "I was able to unwind and not have to focus on work. Got a chance to heal and recharge myself."

During the conference the chaplains also talked about the future of the Chaplain Corps and how the bonds established now are extremely important to the future of the Corps.

"You all are the future of the Chaplain Corps," said Baktis talking to the chaplains and chaplain assistants during the conference.

Baktis continued to say how the battalion chaplains needed to work together with other chaplains in their areas of operations to better support the many Soldiers scattered across Iraq.

"It is time to take care of yourself, so you can go and take care of others as a team," said Baktis.

The 18th Military Police Brigade is deployed from Germany in support of Multi-National Divisions-Baghdad's mission to train and support the Iraqi Police force.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Capt. Jay Clark, 728th Military Police Battalion's chaplain and native of Bismarck, N.D., prepares to descend from the high dive into the pool at Freedom Rest June 3.



US Army photo

Stay Army Strong!!!

Reenlistment at the Cross Sabers

Spc. Jujuan Boyd, a member of the 18th Military Police Brigade's command group personnel security detachment reenlists at the 'Crossed Sabers' in the International Zone, May 19, for 6 years. The Oath of Reenlistment was administered by Col. Mark Spindler; (LEFT) 18th MP Bde., commander.



Contact your reenlistment NCO today.

The Blue Book

By:
Angelika Lantz,
21st TSC Public Affairs

MANNHEIM, Germany – You know the adage about not judging a book by its cover? The 95th Military Police Battalion Spouses' Record Book is a perfect example of why you shouldn't. The book is a modest blue ring binder, referred to as the "blue book."

The motto on the front, "of the troops, for the troops and the families we support," hints at the wealth of information it contains. However, it falls short of revealing how much time, effort and thought it took to compile the binder and how valuable it can be.

Since September, the 95th MP's Family Readiness Group (FRG) hosted the spouses of three deploying units for family pre-deployment processing (PDP) and handed out about 100 binders. The family PDP's hands-on process with eight stations serves a number of purposes.

"The checklists seem to be especially helpful, and the Spouse Emergency Preference form, which we created from different samples. We were able to make it clear that spouses need to think about and take care of themselves," said Stephanie Leary, Family Readiness Support Assistant. "We brought in legal to do powers of attorney for temporary guardianship, next of kin information, insurance paperwork, that kind of thing. We also showed them how to access and use AKO accounts for family members, the FRG and the My Pay Websites."

There is no substitute for making eye contact.

"We were able to introduce the families to key staff and we became familiar with our families. It helped us see red flags, alerting us to potential problems. That way we were not blindsided; we could be proactive," said Christine Bogdan, Senior FRG Advisor.

"The contact information we have is often the cell phone number for the Soldier who is already deployed. By having the spouses complete the family member questionnaire, we receive the most up-to-date information," said Leary.

Mainly, the group said, pre-deployment



Left to right: Stephanie Leary, family readiness support assistant, Cristina Autry FRG volunteer, Melissa Kreitzer, senior enlisted advisor and Christine Bogdan, senior advisor, discuss the many benefits of the 95th Military Police Battalion's Spouses' Record Book they were instrumental in creating, at Taylor Barracks, here, recently.

stress does not need to be exacerbated by last minute legal errands and such.

"As you roll into deployment getting your checklists together is the last thing you want to do; it's not what you are thinking about at the time. You focus on your spouse and family, on quality time," said Melissa Kreitzer, Senior Enlisted Advisor.

The "blue book" is a great tool that can provide military families with some peace of mind; not just during times of deployment. Keeping your life's most critical information in one place, prevents you having to go through a number of drawers and filing cabinets, or worse, mountains of paperwork. And, it is very flexible.

"The book is the result of five years of after action reports and lessons learned during deployments. It started out as a consulting packet that Family Readiness Group leaders at the 272d Military Police Company used," said Melissa Kreitzer, Senior Enlisted FRG Advisor, who came from the 272d MP Co.

"Each unit can make it their own, personalize it. You can add forever, use it like a community phone book. It's really a multi-purpose book. Of course, it should always be updated," said Kreitzer.

"It's such a valuable resource. I told my kids and my neighbor where I keep it, in case I'm involved in an emergency. I expanded it a bit, included guardianship papers. Ever since my computer crashed when I wanted to

pay my bills, I have added copies of account information in the book," said Autry, who is the mother of seven children.

"We have noticed that spouses who went through the PDP and have completed the book feel more self-reliant. This is especially true for new spouses who were very unfamiliar with a lot of things in the unit and the German community. For instance, some had no idea they could be excused from work to attend the PDP. It really helped to have the regulation [USAREUR pamphlet 690-360] in the blue book," said Kreitzer.

"The spouses are very appreciate and thankful for this comprehensive resource. They even get contacted by friends and neighbors, who take it to other units. Just as we were inspired by the book my neighbor, a 44th Signal Battalion spouse, used," said Bogdan.

"Actually, it should be mandatory in the Army," said Autry.

FOR MORE FRG INFORMATION:
ArmyFRG is your direct connection to Command information for your unit. Register today for your unit's Virtual FRG site and get connected to all of the pertinent information and resources you need to stay informed and connected.



<http://www.armyfrg.org/skins/frg/home.aspx?AllowSSL=true>

National Guard MPs transfer authority in Baghdad

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION - CENTER, Iraq – On a hot desert morning near Baghdad, May 24, two National Guard Military Police companies gathered to conduct a transfer of authority of their Police Transition Teams mission in Baghdad and surrounding areas.

The 153rd Military Police Company, Delaware National Guard, transferred authority to the 223rd Military Police Company, Kentucky National Guard, in a Transfer of Authority Ceremony held at Camp Liberty May 24.

“Reflecting on the past twelve months has really impressed on me the fact that the National Guard Soldier is nothing less than a professional force fully capable of accomplishing our Nation’s strategic interests at home and abroad,” said Capt. Joseph Yawn, 153rd MP Co., commander, and native of Laurel, Del.

The Delaware based unit deployed April 2007 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, for the second time, to the areas of Baghdad and Kalsu, Iraq.

“This past year has proven your capabilities beyond of shadow of a doubt,” said Yawn speaking to his Soldiers during the ceremony. “The versatility of each Soldier in this company was a force multiplier for this commander.”

The versatility Yawn refers to can be seen in the many missions the three platoons in the company were tasked to complete during their tour.

“Elements of the 153rd have actively engaged Iraqi police agencies at the National level,” said Lt. Col. Michael Blahovec, commander 793rd Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade.



Maj. Michael Indovina

Delaware National Guardsmen, 1st Sgt. Michael Fields, (left) first sergeant, 153rd Military Police Company, cases the guidon along with Capt. Joe Yawn, commander, 153rd MP Co. during a Transfer of Authority Ceremony held at Camp Liberty, Iraq May 24. After a twelve month deployment the 153rd prepares to return home after completing the unit’s mission to train Iraqi Police while being a part of a Police Transition Team while assigned to the 18th Military Police Brigade in Iraq.

First platoon, 153rd MP Co., conducted habitual training events at the Criminal Investigative Division Academy; which is widely considered one of the best police Academy’s in Iraq. Tasks they trained the IP include, first aid, search techniques, arrest techniques, vehicle searches and unarmed self-defense. Additionally, these Soldiers trained the Protective Services Detail of the Iraqi Commanding General, said Blahovec.

Second Platoon, planned and executed the largest daylight logistics mission through the streets of Baghdad in over four years. Additionally, the platoon., assisted logistically, providing personal security detachment and force protection to the IP academies at Furat and Fiji while supporting the successful training of over 8,000 IPs, said Blahovec.

The 153rd’s 3rd platoon, operated in a geographically remote location. The platoon was tasked with training Sons of Iraq and establishing a new IP station in the Arab Jabour area, south of Baghdad.

The Arab Jabour area was previously considered too dangerous for Coalition Forces. The platoon negotiated real estate deals and construction contracts for the new police station while simultaneously training prospective recruits to man the proposed station, said Blahovec.

In addition to those accomplishments the company also provided direct support to the rapid establishment of the new Furat Police Training Academy.

“Over the course of ten days the unit was responsible for site security and force protection,” continued Blahovec. “The unit also used in-house expertise to assist with providing electricity to several buildings at the facility.”

The Furat Academy currently averages 3,000 police recruit graduates per month. Since February 2008, the facility has trained over 8,000 IP.

The unit also provided a seven man element to serve on the PSD of the Multi-

(see TOA pg. 19)

Solders, IP provide pens, smiles to local children

*Story courtesy of:
Multi-National Division-Center PAO*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE
KALSU, Iraq – After being asked by Family members what he or his fellow Soldiers of the 230th Military Police Company needed for their deployment, one Soldier felt the unit didn't need anything, but local Iraqi children could use some assistance.

"Fortunately we are pretty blessed, living well here on FOB Kalsu, Iraq," said Spc. Jonathan Flanagan, a native of Lumberton, Texas. "We (have) pretty much everything a Soldier needs to survive and we live rather comfortably considering we are in a war zone."

While at the Diyarrah Iraqi Police Station, the idea for the a new project came to him when a child approached him cautiously, calling out: "Pen mista? Mista, mista, pen?" Flanagan recalled.

"I reached into my sleeve and pulled out a pen and thought 'what an odd request, what does a 6-year old want with a pen?'"

Puzzled by the question, Flanagan asked his interpreter for assistance. The interpreter told him the children needed pens, pencils and other school supplies.

"Some kids had back packs, some just carried a half-used spiral (notebook) and a pencil, some had shoes and some didn't," Flanagan said. "It was rather upsetting ... some of the kids are so under-equipped they don't have a fighting chance at an education."

What started with one pen quickly escalated.

"He told his friends that I had pens and before you knew it I was swarmed by children chanting, 'pen mista,'" Flanagan said. "It wasn't long before not only was I out of pens, but my entire squad was out of pens."



Courtesy photo
A little Iraqi boy shakes hands with Spc. Jonathan Flanagan after receiving pens and paper from IP and Soldiers from 230th MP Co. in Diyarrah.

As the children learned of the pen giveaway, Flanagan said soon he and fellow Soldiers were surrounded by the outreached hands of needy children.

Once he and his fellow Soldiers returned back to their home base at Kalsu, they made a trip to the Post Exchange for a pen resupply.

It was the start of "Operation Pen Mista," he said.

"We bought every last pen and pencil in stock, which probably caused a FOB-wide pen shortage for a week but we didn't care," Flanagan said.

After returning from another patrol in Diyarrah, Flanagan e-mailed his aunt and told her there was something she could do for the children of Diyarrah.

She contacted Rev. Chuck Huffman of United Methodist Temple, in Port Arthur, Texas, and his parishioners rapidly organized a school supply drive for the kids of Diyarrah.

Within weeks boxes of supplies began

arriving in support of "Operation Pen Mista."

"I was overcome by the passion these people had for helping others," Flanagan said. "The next step was delivering the supplies to the children."

The supplies were loaded onto a truck and a group of IP along with the Soldiers began handing out the supplies.

"As we began our march to the middle of town within a few feet out of the driveway, the first two children approached us," Flanagan said. "We waved them over and much to their surprise the IP began handing them crayons and paper."

The word spread immediately, and Soldiers and IP were swarmed with children the rest of the day.

Ironically, Flanagan ran into Saddam, the child who first asked him for a pen.

"This time I reached into the truck and pulled out a whole pack of pens and gave them to him," he said.

TOA, from PG. 17

National Corps-Iraq Commander.

"During their time here, the Soldiers of the 153rd "Griffons" conducted over 650 missions and over 2,000 combat patrols on the streets of Iraq," said Blahovec. "These missions amassed a total of over 500,000 miles over the most dangerous roads in the world."

As the Griffons operated on these dangerous roads and executed a variety of missions, they accomplished their main goal, which was for all their Soldiers to return home.

After a long tour, Yawn ended by saying he would serve with the great leadership of the 153rd any time and anywhere.

After remarking on the unit's accomplishments Blahovec bid the 153rd farewell.

"Thanks for your service and the

tremendous performance of this unit," said Blahovec, speaking to the Griffons. "You have had a profound impact here, be proud as you leave here and enjoy a well earned break."

To the Soldiers of the 223rd "Automatic" MP Co., Blahovec recognized their hard work and determination getting to this point and being ready to take on the mission they have in front of them.

"You have worked hard to get to this point," said Blahovec speaking to the 223rd Soldiers. "You have trained hard, prepared, and met all gates to arrive here today fully ready to assume this mission."

The 223rd has deployed several times in the units decorated history including a recent deployment in 2003 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I do not know many of you, but I know that there are many experienced veterans, competent leaders and exceptional Soldiers

representing the great state of Kentucky standing with us here today," said Blahovec, welcoming the 223rd to the ranks of the 793rd MP Bn., during the ceremony.

The 223rd will support the battalion in Police Transition Team operations in the Multi-National Division-Center area of operations.

"We have worked very hard over the past months preparing for this mission," said Capt. Charles Hill, commander 223rd MP Co., and native of London, Ky. "We stand ready to support the 793rd MP Bn., and the 18th MP Bde., with our full combat power and extensive civilian occupational skills."

The ceremony concluded after the uncasing of the 223rd unit colors and the casing of the 153rd colors, as the unit prepares to head back to Delaware in the upcoming days.



Maj. Michael Indovina

MPs screen possible IP recruits

Soldiers and civilian translators from the 18th Military Police Brigade's Provincial Police Transition Team review and assist the Iraqi Provincial Directorate of Police (Baghdad) with hundreds of Sons of Iraq (Abna al-Iraq) application packets. The packets subsequently are submitted to the Ministry of Interior to be processed into hiring orders. The hiring orders will give Sol the opportunity to serve their country by becoming Iraqi Policemen.



Maj. Michael Indovina

MND-B Soldiers improve CLS skills

Sgt. Ryan Blas (left), a military police Soldier from Multi-National Division – Baghdad's 18th Military Police Brigade and a native of Chalan Pago, Guam, successfully inserts an IV into Spc. Brandon Nethken's arm as the Soldiers from the 18th MP Bde.'s Personal Security Team participate in a Combat Lifesavers Course held on Camp Victory June 3. U.S. Army Soldiers are instructed on how to perform basic medical care techniques in case the need arises under emergency conditions to take care of their fellow Soldiers.



Maj. Michael Indovina

Col. Mark Spindler, a native of St. Louis, Mo., who serves as the commander of Multi-National Division – Baghdad's, 18th Military Police Brigade, takes time May 12 to review and assess areas in the Internally Displaced Civilian Camps in Baghdad.

Family members reunite in Iraq

Story by:
AT2 Jeffrey Carroll
728th MP Bn., UPAR

While wearing the uniform of the United States is often a family tradition; sons following in father's footsteps, daughters wanting to continue the in the shadow of their Mom's; The Rivera family has taken this to a whole different level.

Growing up in Puerto Rico, Sgt. Carlo Rivera looked up to his cousin Sgt. Rivera as a role model and someone who he wanted to pattern his life after. Flash forward over 20 years, and both Rivera's are now serving their country.

This in itself would be fairly significant, but both Soldiers are serving in the same Battalion on the same base within easy walking distance of each other.

Sgt. Rivera, a member of the 728th MP Bn., is currently serving as a member of the S6 shop on COB Speicher.

As one of the most knowledgeable computer and tactical experts in the Battalion, the go to guy if you will, he is responsible for the implementation, maintenance and upkeep for the unit's computers.

On the tactical side of the house, he rolls out every morning for pre-mission checks on the PSD squad's vehicles, ensuring COMSEC is

loaded, BFT's are working properly and radios are ready for another mission outside the wire.

As fate would have it, Sgt. Rivera, of the 320th MP Co., arrived here on Speicher several days before Sgt. Rivera (of the 728th MP BN) was

He followed these comments with saying that pinning his cousin to sergeant is just the first step on what he believes is the first of many promotions. All in the battalion who have worked with our Rivera will most certainly agree!



Both Rivera's come from big families and military service isn't out of the norm. What makes this situation unique is that this isn't the first time members from the Rivera family have met up in a time of war. This is the third!

This is the **Third Time** members of the Rivera

family have met up serving overseas for their country! Both men have distinguished themselves through their tireless dedication to the mission as well as through loyalty to the soldiers under them. If their past history is any indication, these two Soldiers have a long and very successful future for them in Army and in any future endeavor they choose to take on.

due to get promoted to the rank of Sergeant! Communications flew quickly between the two cousins as they tried to get schedules and mission times coordinated and a historic promotion ceremony together. Surprisingly, things were able to be worked out and Sgt. Rivera was able to pin his cousin to the new rank of Sergeant.

Following the pinning, The elder Rivera remarked how much he enjoys being stationed with his cousin and what an honor it is to be able to pin him.

Peacekeeper Soldiers celebrate the Fourth of July!!!



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Sgt. Michael Daniels (left), native of Aiken, S.C., and Sgt. Jose Gomez (right), fold the national colors following a reenlistment ceremony at Camp Liberty on the Fourth of July. Both Soldiers, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment 716th Military Police Battalion, are deployed from Fort Campbell, Ky., and are currently assigned to the 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad. The two Soldiers from the detachment reenlisted with an additional 1,200 servicemembers who reenlisted earlier in the day on Camp Victory.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Cpl. Victor Cole, a human resources sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 716th Military Police Battalion, and native of Indianapolis, sings the National Anthem on the Fourth of July prior to a unit cookout at Camp Liberty celebrating our Nations birthday.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Ebenreiter, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 716th Military Police Battalion and native of Chicago, flips hamburgers and steaks during a unit cook out at Camp Liberty on the Fourth of July.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

Ebenreiter is the vocalist for the unit band 'Don't quit your day job'.

Husband and wife reenlist during mass reenlistment

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

CAMP VICTORY, IRAQ – Stability and benefits are two of the many reasons Soldiers serving in Iraq elected to stay in the Army July 4, during the largest reenlistment ceremony of deployed Soldiers the Iraq theater has seen at Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory.

More than 1200 service members reenlisted July 4 in a ceremony that was administered by Gen. David Petraeus, commanding general, Multi-National Forces – Iraq.

Job stability and medical benefits are important to many young Soldiers, who are thinking about starting or have families to support back home.

For Sergeants Ryan and Erika Lowe, starting a family with the stability and benefits the Army provides was a major consideration the husband and wife team reflect upon when deciding to reenlist.

“We talked about starting a family and we think the military is the best way to do that,” said Sgt. Ryan Lowe, a military police squad leader, 64th Military Police Company and native of Wasilla, Alaska.

The Lowe family, who met in the first few years of their military careers, said it was a joint decision for both of them to reenlist during the ceremony July 4.

“The Army really is trying to keep good Soldiers,” said Sgt. Erika Lowe, who serves as a Police Transition Team team leader, with the 401st Military Police Company and native of Del Rio, Texas.

The 401st MP Co. is on their final month of a 15-month deployment, in which, they carried out PTT operations in the Baghdad area while training Iraqi Police to take over responsibility for the rule of law.

The 64th and 401st MP Companies are deployed from Fort Hood, Texas and are currently deployed at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

“We were very lucky that both of our companies were co-located and we thank our command for allowing us to be together while we were deployed,” said Lowe (Ryan), who elected to stay in Iraq to be with his wife after he already completed a 15-month tour serving on a security team for the 89th Military Police Brigade’s command group.

Ryan Lowe is currently on his 23 consecutive month in country.

“I thought it was a good opportunity to save money, have some stability and we got to stay together,” said Lowe (Ryan),



Maj. Michael Indovina
Sergeants Ryan and Erika Lowe, members of the 64th and 401st Military Police Companies respectively, reenlisted during the July 4 mass reenlistment ceremony at Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory in order to provide stability for their family in the future. Sgt. Ryan Lowe is a native of Wasilla, Alaska and Sgt. Erika Lowe is a native of Del Rio, Texas. The 64th and 401st MP Companies are deployed at Camp Liberty and are on their final month of a 15-month deployment as they prepare to return to Fort Hood, Texas to their home station. The 64th and 401st are currently assigned to the 716th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

referring to the reasons he extended his tour to be with his wife.

The young family has been in the Army for a combined seven years and say they enjoy getting the chance to travel all over the world while serving their country.

“What other job could you see all the places in the world we have seen,” said Lowe (Ryan), who is reenlisting with his wife to be stationed together in Brussels, Belgium for their next assignment with NATO.

Beside stability, benefits and the ability to travel all over the world the Lowe’s said they love being Noncommissioned Officers and that is another reason they elected to stay in the Army.

“I like working with Soldiers and seeing them grow in their skills as military police,” said Erika.

“Building up Soldiers is a great experience and just being an NCO is one of the reasons why I elected to stay in,” said Ryan.

In addition to the Lowe family, 25 other Soldiers from the 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad reenlisted during the ceremony.

During the mass reenlistment today, Petraeus thanked all the soldiers for their service and sacrifice for their country and added, there is no where else he would rather be but spending the nation’s birthday with the best Soldiers in the world.

Petraeus also mentioned that this ceremony is telling and sends a message out to the world about American service member’s dedication to their country; friend and foe.

116th MP Co. Provides Academy to Train IP in Tal Afar

By:
Multi-National Division - North PAO

Tal Afar, Iraq – 15 training iterations were completed with over 1000 IP in attendance at the Tal Afar Academy that was established during the duration of the 1/116th Military Police (MP) Company deployment. The 116th continues to provide mentorship and training to the Iraqi Police (IP), however establishing a central training facility for countless iterations of IP to train was one of the hallmarks of their tour. The Academy, established in Tal Afar, began with a ten day crash course on police essentials, gaining recognition for the pilot course, the Ninewah Provincial Police Headquarters sponsored it, and it was accredited to teach the MOI approved 30-day course, graduating the first class on the 29th of May.

Several squads frequent the Academy in order to maintain quality training with oversight to the IP and mentorship to the instructors; who were trained in depth and certified by the 116th in the train-the-trainer course. Yet another initiative by the 116th was the force protection for the facility, which was evaluated, coordinated, and emplaced by 1st Platoon. Like any Iraqi

Police Facility, the Academy requires the Police Transition Team (PTT) to conduct regular visits focused on train, coach, teach, and mentor principles. The success of the Academy's training program and partnership by PTT were prevalent as IP began to assume operations.

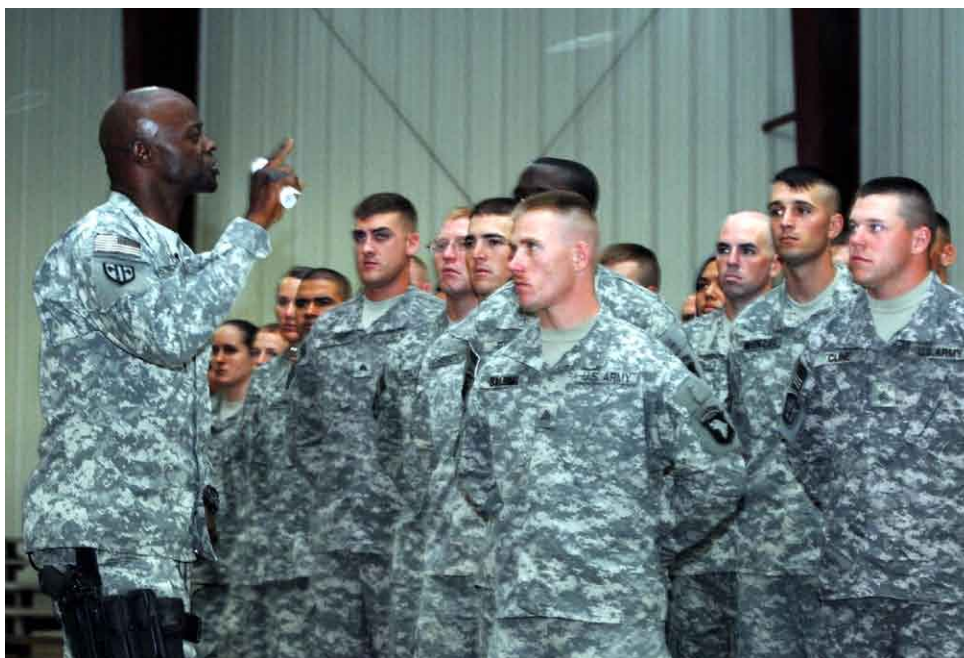
On 18 May, 2008, IP were tasked to secure a MEDCAP for Avgani with the aid of IA, proving the transition of the IP into a competent and essential component for city events. The planning and execution of site security for the IP's was a success; the accolades helped establish the new District Police Chief in his position. Although PTT was there during synch meetings and training, it was the IP that made the mission a true success.

Through the constant mentorship provided by the 116th PTT training, assessing, and developing the Iraqi Police successes have been made. PTT helped to identify and strengthen weak areas, with course specialized training. A wide range of topics have been covered, from investigations, leading patrols, community policing, personnel security, convoy operations, training, incidence response and leadership



Courtesy photo
116th Military Police Company Soldier searches an Iraqi woman in Tal Afar.

classes. The MPs are forced to develop creative solutions for weak trends throughout the district which have resulted in the Police of Tal Afar greatly improving and developing as a credible security force as result of Coalition Force's diligence.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

NCO Induction ceremony

Command Sgt. Maj. Bernard McPherson, native of Orangeburg, S.C., and command sergeant major of the 18th Military Police Brigade addresses seventy-four newly inducted Noncommissioned Officers of the 716th Military Police Battalion, 18th MP Bde., Multi-National Division-Baghdad, into the Corps of NCOs June 21 at Camp Liberty during a NCO Induction Ceremony. The 716th MP Bn. is deployed from Fort Campbell, Ky.

IP making difference in local Baghdad community

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

CAMP VICTORY, IRAQ – When Iraqi police and Coalition Forces arrived at the Zainab Girls School in Hurriyah June 12, they were met by the smiling faces of more than 50 children and their caretakers in the Baghdad community.

“This makes it all worth while,” said 1st Sgt. Thomas Gray, 64th MP Co., 18th Military Police Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, who is a native of Oxford, Conn., after boxes full of school supplies and toys were handed out to the grateful Iraqi children.

The Hurriyah IP brought toys and supplies to hand out to the children to help show the families of the area that IP were here to help protect and serve the community.

“This event gives the IP an opportunity to interact with the people other than neighborhood patrols and checkpoint operations,” said Staff Sgt. Joseph Reinsburrow, squad leader, 64th Military Police Company, who is a native of Towanda, Pa.

Reinsburrow and his squad of military police Soldiers have been conducting Police Transition Team operations with the Hurriyah IP for eleven months now. The PTT Soldiers are military police, who interact, train and advise IP personnel from the local police officer, or “shurta,” to the most senior leader of the provincial police commander, as they conduct their day-to-day missions.

The mission for the IP on this day was to hand out school supplies and toys to the local children, many of whom are orphans.

“It is always a good feeling when you can make an Iraqi kid smile,” said 1st Lt. Geneva Arnold, platoon leader, 64th MP Co., who is a native of Tucson, Ariz.



*Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
Staff Sgt. Joseph Reinsburrow, 64th Military Police Company and native of Towanda, Pa., holds an Iraqi child June 12 in Hurriyah, while Iraqi police and Coalition Forces hand out toys and school supplies to the local children.*

The IP handed out backpacks, school supplies and soccer balls to the children, who were ecstatic upon receiving the items from the policemen and MND-B Soldiers. The operation helped further the relationship between the locals and the IP.

“The citizens of Hurriyah are not afraid to come and talk to the IP,” said Sgt. Angel Villegas, 64th MP Co., who is a native of El Paso, Texas. “On normal operation days at the station, there are lines out the door of people coming to get assistance from the IP.”

The PTT Soldiers said they felt the Hurriyah citizens recognize the Hurriyah IP as a force dedicated to bring the rule of law to the community.

“The citizens see the IP are just out there doing their job as IP,” said Reinsburrow.

In the past year of working with the IP, the PTT has seen the IP become a well-recognized force that brings law and order to their local community.

“When we got here, the IP were just getting a foothold in the area,” said Villegas. “Now, they are a force capable of operating on their own.”

The Hurriyah IP showed their ability to protect their community during an uprising by criminal groups in Baghdad.

“The IP stayed at their posts and manned the checkpoints during the uprising,” said Reinsburrow.

(see 64th pg. 25)

64th, from PG. 24

Now that violence has decreased in the area, IP can focus on building better relationships within their local communities.

“The IP are making a positive impact on their citizens’ lives,” said Arnold.

After all the school supplies and toys were handed out, the IP and MND-B Soldiers mounted back up in their vehicles to return to their daily mission of keeping the citizens of Hurriyah safe.

The 64th MP Co. is deployed from Fort Hood, Texas, and is currently assigned to the 716th Military Police Battalion, 18th MP Bde., MND-B.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

1st Sgt. Thomas Gray, 64th Military Police Company, who is a native of Oxford, Conn., is swarmed by the children of Hurriyah following a community policing operation June 12, which the children received toys and school supplies from the local police force and Coalition Forces.



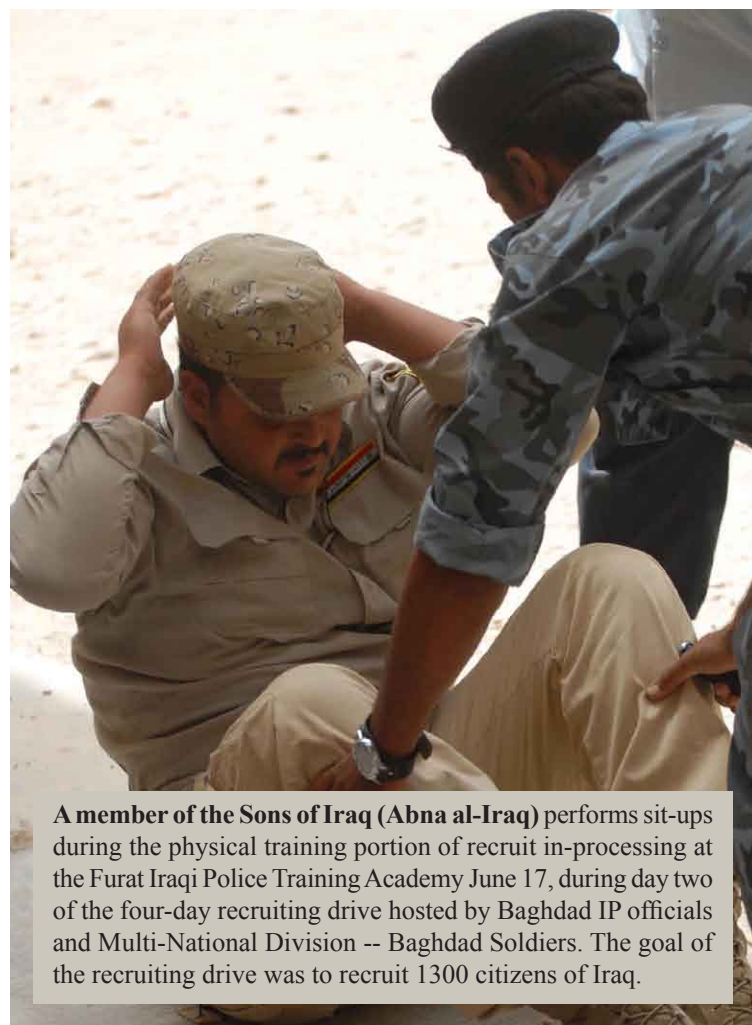
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

An Iraqi policeman prepares backpacks full of school supplies to be handed out to children in Hurriyah June 12. The backpacks are part of a community policing effort between Iraqi police and their local communities to help build a bond between the citizens of Hurriyah and the police force.



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

The commander of the Hurriyah Iraqi police hands out supplies to the citizens of Hurriyah June 12 as part of a community policing effort to help improve the citizens relationship with the local police.



A member of the Sons of Iraq (Abna al-Iraq) performs sit-ups during the physical training portion of recruit in-processing at the Furat Iraqi Police Training Academy June 17, during day two of the four-day recruiting drive hosted by Baghdad IP officials and Multi-National Division -- Baghdad Soldiers. The goal of the recruiting drive was to recruit 1300 citizens of Iraq.



Thousands endure storm to become Iraqi Police



Sons of Iraq (Abna al-Iraq) wait in line outside the Furat Iraqi Police Training Facility June 17, to start the process of becoming IP recruits. The four-day recruiting drive is part of the Multi-National Division -- Baghdad plan of IP expansion.

By:
Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger
18th MP Bde. PAO

Approximately 2000 Iraqi citizens began the process of becoming Iraqi Police at the Furat IP Training Facility in Baghdad June 17, despite a sandstorm that blanketed the city.

Iraqi Police officials and military police Soldiers with the 18th Military Police Brigade set up a four-day recruiting drive at the Furat facility to reach a goal of sending 1300 new recruits to Basic Recruit Training.

"A little over 2000 civilians showed up today," said 1st Lt. Christopher Gehri, officer in charge of the Furat IP Training Facility. "We can process through about 400 recruits a day with a total goal of 1300 recruits in four days."

The Police Transition Team was ecstatic to see the number of civilians who braved the weather to become IPs.

"The benefit of having so many people show up today means we have a lot of hope," said Gehri. "They are trying to get jobs and take care of their communities and

families."

The new recruits are part of Multi-National Division -- Baghdad's plan to expand the IP force.

The increase in police force is intended to strengthen the overall security of Baghdad and is aimed at training more than 25,000 IP recruits by 2008.

Officials say more than 22,000 police have already been deployed in the Iraqi capital as part of the first phase of expansion.

"We are getting the job done," said Gehri. "We are providing the amount of Iraqi Security Forces to provide a stable Baghdad, which is our goal."

As the citizens entered the facility perimeter, they were separated into different groups according to the areas they were from, checked for credentials and given an in-processing packet to complete, consisting of a literacy test, physical fitness test and medical examination.

Once they completed those steps, their packets were stamped off by an IP official and sent to higher headquarters for background checks.

After that, the recruits received orders on when to return for training.

"The Iraqis are collecting the packets and information," said Gehri. "they are the ones really making this day successful."

Gehri has been working with IPs in Baghdad for nine months and says he has seen a great improvement in the IP force since arriving.

"They are taking whatever we teach them and they are running with it," said Gehri. "They are doing a great job."

Staff Sgt. William Lile, 223rd Military Police Company, Kentucky National Guard, agrees with Gehri on the improvements in the IP and Iraqi way of life since his last deployment.

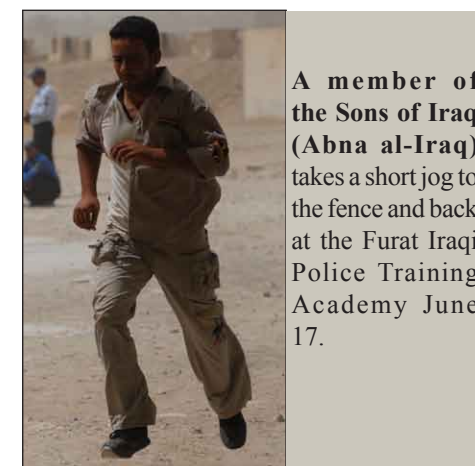
"It's amazing to see the difference in quality of life improvements for the Iraqi people," said Lile. "They have electricity, sometimes all day now, water, and they have established a strong infrastructure since the last time I was here."

"They are doing everything they can to rebuild for

themselves," said Lile. "We are just providing security in the process."

As day two of the four-day recruiting effort came to a close, another 400 recruits were given orders and began to prepare themselves for BRT, which they will attend in the upcoming months.

"We are succeeding and we will be successful," said Gehri.



A member of the Sons of Iraq (Abna al-Iraq) takes a short jog to the fence and back at the Furat Iraqi Police Training Academy June 17.

MPs stand up IP Training Center in Diyala

By:
Capt. Laura Mack
728th MP Bn. UPAR

DIYALA, Iraq – As the dust turns to heat and the sun begins to pound down on a regular basis, the Soldiers of the 728th Military Police Battalion are entering into the eighth month of their deployment.

A lot has been accomplished since they first arrived in Kuwait last November and then moved onward north to Contingency Operating Base Speicher in Iraq.

As the Battalion continues to successfully command and control nine Military Police Companies across four partnered provinces in northern Iraq, there is one unique mission that the 728th MP Battalion has undertaken.

That mission is the startup and execution of the Multinational Division North, Iraqi Police Regional Training Center in Diyala, Iraq.

Beginning as a plot of dirt on Forward Operating Base Grizzly in Diyala Iraq, the RTC has grown into a full-fledged Iraqi Police academy accredited by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior.

With a concept that began within the 728th MP Battalion's operations and plans shop, the initial ideas and planning were hashed out around a conference room table.

"On March 15 there was absolutely nothing here, now there is a booming Academy that has already trained over 950 Iraqi Police in Diyala," said Capt. David Castillo, officer in charge of the RTC.

With the support of 1st Armored Division and the Soldiers within the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 728th MP Battalion, tents, equipment, contracts, food and all the other necessities that make a facility operational were gathered.

Construction went under way and the Academy officially opened its doors in April.



*Capt. Laura C. Mack
Maj. Gen. Mark Hertling, Task Force Iron commander, Lt. Col. Brian R. Bisacre the 728th MP Battalion commander, and Diyala, Iraq, police officers, watch as the graduating Iraqi police class pass and review during a graduation held at the Iraqi Police Regional Training Center in Diyala, Iraq.*

And no one has looked back since.

The RTC now stands as a fully functional academy that has trained hundreds of Iraqi policemen. There has been one train the trainer course that was completed in April and since then two full Basic Recruit Training classes have graduated.

Within these classes literally hundreds of Iraqi police received training that spans from weapons handling and procedures to check point operations to ethics.

"The MND-N RTC is a tangible and quantifiable success story for training Iraqi Police. It will undoubtedly leave a lasting effect on the improved security of MND-N and Diyala province," said Capt. Franklin Dennis, MND-N Iraqi Police Services cell.

As the third class of over 600 IP begin another BRT rotation, the back-log of untrained IP continues to significantly decrease.

The RTC will be expanded in order to provide an increased class size and further expedite the rate at which untrained policemen are being trained. As the other

three Academies within Kirkuk, Salah ad Din and Ninewa provinces continue their training cycles, the RTC will continue to augment these academies and provide another venue from which the Provincial Director of Police within each province has to send their police.

The success of this site will continue, and Iraqi Police will continue to receive quality training with the over-sight of Coalition Forces. Although this is a significant accomplishment for the Battalion, there are many more to come in the future.

"Although the 728th MP Battalion has been the lead in establishing and getting this training center off to a great start, the real success is the fact that our partners, the Iraqi police, are executing quality training to make a professional police force with the goal of serving its citizens," commented Lt. Col. Brian R. Bisacre the 728th MP Battalion commander, The Battalion will continue conducting Police Transition Team operations within MND-N while providing Iraqi Police Services development and expertise to the 1st Armored Division.

Obeying General Order 1

...a Key to Staying out of Trouble in Iraq

By:
Capt. Bonnie Dunlop,
Command Judge Advocate

A General Order is essentially a laundry list of conduct that the Commanding General has identified as prejudicial to maintenance and good order and discipline of all forces assigned within a particular area of responsibility.

Violations of General Order #1 also account for a majority of disciplinary actions coming from the Iraq's theatre, many resulting in punitive actions but not criminal are processed through the Article 15s and General Officer Letter of Reprimands. Some actions even result in a Court-Martial.

Unlike most orders, General Orders do not require proof that the service member or civilian serving with the force had knowledge of the order to take UCMJ action. The burden is on the individual to be familiar with the contents of all General Orders issued by their Commanding Generals.

Specifically, all service members and civilians serving with the 18th Military Police Brigade must follow MNC-I General Order Number 1 (G.O. 1) dated 14 February 2008.

Additionally, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Military Police Brigade, the 95th Military Police Battalion and a number of companies within the 716th Military Police Battalion must also follow MND-B's G.O. 1 guidelines.

Soldiers that are under the command of the 728th Military Police Battalion must follow MND-N's G.O.1 in addition to MNC-I G.O.1; and respectively for 793rd MP Bn. Soldiers who work under command of the MND-C also apply to MND-C's G.O.1 orders.

So, how does one avoid getting into trouble?

Soldiers need to read and become familiar with all G.O.1's that apply to you.

Below is a summary of prohibited activities listed under MNC-I's G.O.1:

- a. Purchase, possession, use or sale of privately owned firearms, ammunition or explosives.
- b. Entering into Mosques or other religious sites unless directed to do by proper military authorities if you are not a practicing Muslim.
- c. Introduction, purchase, possession, sale, transfer, manufacture or consumption of any alcoholic beverages except that which is authorized for religious purposes. - *This is one of the more common areas that get individuals in trouble.*
- d. Introduction, purchase, possession, sale, transfer, manufacture or consumption of controlled substances or prescription medication **without a valid prescription**. - *If you have a valid prescription, you are breaking the law if you share that with anyone else or if you take a friend or family member's medicine which you do not have a prescription for.*
- e. "Huffing/Sniffing" items such as glue or compressed air.
- f. Introduction, purchase, possession, sale, transfer, creation, or display of any pornographic or sexually explicit material except that which is distributed through AAFES or MWR outlets within MNC-I's AOR.

- This is another common area that gets individuals in trouble.
 - g. Gambling
 - h. Taking or destroying archeological artifacts.
 - i. Photographing or filming detainees, human casualties or remains. Such acts may also be considered Law of War violations.
 - j. Photographing or filming military installation access points or other areas that would create an OPSEC violation.
 - k. Selling or exchanging currency other than at the official host-nation exchange rates.
 - l. Adopting pets or mascots or feeding animals.
 - m. Proselytizing (meaning to convert or attempt to convert from one doctrine or faith to another) of any religion faith or practice.
 - n. Taking or retaining enemy property unless being granted a waiver by proper military authority.
 - o. Possessing, operating or purchasing a vehicle not owned or leased by the United States government.
 - p. Possessing, touching or using without legal authority unexploded ordnance.
 - q. Any kind of sexual contact with Iraqi, local or foreign nationals who are not members of coalition forces.
 - r. Males and females will not cohabitate, which means presenting themselves as husband and wife when they are not, or spend the night in living quarters of any kind unless lawfully married or in situations where military exigency necessitates mixed residency.
- It is important to note that a violation of G.O.1 is not limited to junior enlisted. Senior leaders (officers/senior enlisted) are responsible to adhere to the G.O.1s applied to them. So remember no one is exempt! Cases have been brought against senior leaders and they have ruined their careers over such conduct.

As a reminder, if you are a leader that knows of an individual violating G.O.1 and do nothing to prevent it, then you could be found guilty of dereliction of duty.

Finally, G.O.1 makes it clear that individuals must also become familiar with and respect the laws and customs of their host nation (as long as it does not interfere with official duties). Individuals may also be punished for acts of disrespect, for example, improper treatment of the Quran, or violation of host nation laws.

Now you know your facts! Be a good Soldier and Be Army Strong and adhere to the laws and regulations you have volunteered to uphold.

We are ambassadors to the nations we visit and fight in, be a good Ambassador...set the example for others to follow!

Sailing The Desert

Story by:
AT2 Jeffrey Carroll
728th MP Bn., UPAR

Seriously...where is all the water here at Speicher... Navy equals water? I've

spent the better part of 8 months wandering around the base looking for something to float on, and the only thing I've come up with is a puddle after a nasty rain storm!

I thought that it might be a good idea to offer up some observations as I near the end of my time being a sand sailor on how things are working with the Army and how ya'll do business different.

1. Hooah-
The Navy doesn't have a word that means anything and everything except no. I dig it, and will probably get some funny looks when I get back to the "normal" Navy and toss it into conversations. For example :

"Petty Officer Carroll, did you swap the deck?" "Hooah!"
confused look ensues

2. PT- Wow. You guys really take PT seriously. Maybe it's just me, but I'm still trying to wrap my head around the purpose of 15 mile ruck marches and "smoke" sessions.

Formation runs also. Just can't see myself wanting to run 6 miles all the while singing songs about how much PT rules and every other unit than mine are slightly more intelligent

the mission above everything else, as well as loyalty to your Soldiers is one of the best things about the Army. We can and should take a lesson from ya'll.



than monkeys.

3. Corporal/Specialist- Both are E-4's, but only one is an NCO. However, being promoted to Corporal isn't a permanent thing and can be taken away when you transfer? 8 months, and I still don't understand it. To me, if I get promoted. I better get more money and my new rank should follow me wherever I go.

4. Mission First- Ok. This is something I really like. Not to rip on my beloved service, but you guys have us beat on this. Dedication to

5. The DFAC-
Best place to eat on deployment that I've ever seen. Period. Beats the pants off the food we get served onboard Carriers and other ships. Great variety and always tastes great. Bravo Zulu! (Navy slang meaning good job)

I really didn't know what to expect when I volunteered to come work with the Army. I honestly thought that I'd be living in the sand in a sleeping bag, all the while having to kill and eat camel spiders with by bare hands cooking over a fire that I made as well.

It's been more rewarding and more fun working with the 728th MP Bn than I ever imagined. It's easily the single best thing I've ever done in the 12 years I've spent in the military.

The Soldiers I've met have been consummate professionals, from Lt.Col Bisacre down to the NCO's and the junior Soldiers they so capably lead.

Everyone has made me feel like a part of the family. Would I do it again?

Hooah!